

HB854 Statewide Housing Study

Program Fact Sheet

Housing Choice Vouchers

Virginia Housing

Note: This fact sheet was created in October 2021. Program details can change regularly. For the most up-to-date information on this program and a program contact, please visit the link below:

[Link to program website](#)

01 Program goals

The Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) program was designed by the federal government to provide rental assistance, or subsidy, to extremely low-income, very low-income, and low-income households. The program goal is to assist families to find affordable housing in the open rental housing market and to deconcentrate poverty from centralized communities. It was also designed to help families transition from public housing to the open rental market and self-sufficiency.

02 Funding sources

The majority of funding for the HCV program comes from the U.S Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Virginia Housing provides supplemental funding to the program to cover other administrative costs when there is a funding shortfall.

03 Governance

HUD sets the policies as to how the funds can be allocated, both administratively and for the rental subsidy.

04 Population served

The Housing Choice Voucher program serves extremely low-income, very low-income, and

low-income households. Individuals and families that meet the program eligibility criteria (income, legal status, criminal background, debts owed to HUD) can qualify for the subsidy.

05 How program works

Households can qualify for the subsidy by first applying to an open waitlist. Once placed on the waitlist, the applicant will be called by the public housing agency (PHA) to come in for a program eligibility review. For the eligibility review, the applicant will be required to provide verification documents, such as birth certificates, marriage certificates, social security numbers, income verification, family composition status, citizenship status, and residency status.

If the applicant is approved for the program, they will be issued a voucher to search for a housing unit in the open market (the term of the voucher can range from 60 to 180 days, depending on the PHA's lease up rate and funding). Once the applicant finds a unit for rent, the PHA will contact the landlord, conduct a fair market rent assessment, perform a housing quality standards (HQS) inspection, and enter into a Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) contract for the unit. If the unit passes the HQS inspection, the family and the landlord will receive a letter from the PHA regarding the HAP amount and the tenant amount of the rent. The applicant will then be approved to move into the housing unit.

06 Program history

The HCV program began in 1974.

07 Program highlights

- Virginia Housing administers Housing Choice Vouchers through 31 local agencies that cover 80 localities across Virginia, with 15 localities being served by two different local agencies and two being served by three different local agencies. The majority

of these localities are in Central Virginia and the Middle Peninsula.

- Through Virginia Housing, there are roughly over 9,000 vouchers being administered.
- There are substantial differences in the rental markets of these 80 localities which makes it difficult to make generalizations about population and assistance levels.